# Routine Access Policy for the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission

October 23, 2003

# Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission
# Routine Access Policy

## 1. POLICY STATEMENT

This "Routine Access" policy for the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission (NSHRC) is designed to provide persons with an opportunity to obtain certain categories of records without having to submit a *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* application. It shall be administered in accordance with the following principles:

### a) Personal Privacy

The policy shall be applied in a manner which will be considerate and protective of the personal privacy of individuals and records subject to this policy shall be considered for release and severing in a manner consistent with the provisions of the FOIPOP Act.

### b) Timeliness

The NSHRC will respond to any "Routine Access" requests in a reasonable and timely fashion.

### c) Cost Recovery

Fees for the reproduction and provision of records may be charged where authorized by policies, regulations, or statutes.

### d) Transparency

This policy shall be made readily available to the public.

### e) Reasonableness

This policy shall apply to requests for reasonable quantities of records.

## 2. DEFINITIONS

***Routine Access*** is the routine or automatic release, in full or in part, of certain types of administrative or operational records as a matter of course in response to a request without the need for a formal application for records under the *FOIPOP Act*.

***Active Dissemination*** is the periodic and proactive release of information or records in the absence of a request using mechanisms such as the Internet, libraries, etc. .

***FOIPOP Access*** is the release of a record in response to a formal FOIPOP application made under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

***A Record*** "includes books, documents, maps, drawings, photographs, letters, vouchers, papers and any other thing on which information is recorded or stored by graphic, electronic, mechanical or other means, but does not include a computer program or any other mechanism that produces records". (clause 3(1) (k) *FOIPOP Act*)

## 3. POLICY OBJECTIVES

The objective of the implementation of this policy is the accessibility of certain records routinely without additional administrative time being required of staff to fulfill "Routine Access" requests . It is also to provide a greater certainty of access for those requesting information, and reflect the spirit of openness and accountability of the FOIPOP legislation.

## 4. APPLICATION

This policy applies to all staff, and to all records designated under this policy in accordance with the attached schedule.

This policy shall apply only to requests for reasonable quantities of records and shall not apply to a request for more than 50 pages of records in a particular category and/or time period.. Repetitive requests by an individual for significant volumes of records or the separation of a request into several small requests totalling a large volume, shall not be subject to the policy. It is important to ensure that the application of the policy not unduly interfere with the day-to-day operations of the NSHRC.

Requests made under this policy do not apply to information subject to exemptions under the Act. Personal information will be severed with the same criteria and in the same manner as requests made under the FOIPOP Act.

Routine Access requests only apply to information created after October 23, 2003.

## 5. POLICY DIRECTIVES

In order to ensure efficient and effective application of this policy, the following directives will be implemented:

- A copy of this policy will be posted on the NSHRC website (http://gov.ns.ca/humanrights/).
- All NSHRC staff will be briefed on this policy and its application by the FOIPOP Administrator

and new staff will be informed of the policy during orientation.

- Requests under this policy will be responded to by the FOIPOP Administrator in consultation with senior management of the NSHRC.

- The NSHRC, through the FOIPOP Administrator, will ensure accurate records of requests under this policy are maintained.

## 6. POLICY GUIDELINES

Once a request for "Routine Access" to a particular record, or set of records, has been received, it shall be forwarded to the FOIPOP Administrator, who shall review the request and determine if the records are within the schedule of those designated. If the policy does not apply to the request, a response to the requester shall be provided promptly and shall indicate what other avenues may be available to obtain the information ( e.g. FOIPOP application). If the policy applies to the request, the records shall be provided to the applicant within a reasonable period of time, but no later than 30 days from receipt of the request.

## 7. ACCOUNTABILITY

The Director and Chief Executive Officer of the NSHRC shall be accountable for the approval and implementation of this policy.

## 8. COMPLIANCE

The Director and Chief Executive Officer of the NSHRC shall be responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy.

## 9. EVALUATION

The "Routine Access" Program established under this policy shall be evaluated on an annual basis by the FOIPOP Administrator.

## 10. REFERENCES

Section 27, *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIPOP) Act*
Section 35, *Nova Scotia Human Rights Act*

## 11. INQUIRIES

Inquiries under this policy should be made to:

Michael Noonan
FOIPOP Administrator
Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission
P.O. Box 2221
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3C4

Courier address:

6th Floor, Joseph Howe Building
1690 Hollis Street
Halifax, Nova Scotia

Tel: (902) 424-4622
Fax: (902) 424-2407
Email: noonanmg@gov.ns.ca

## 12. APPENDICES

The following information is covered by this policy:

a)

| HUMAN RESOURCES |
|---|
| **General Documentation** |
| *NSHRC organizational chart* |
| *Generic information on benefits and hours of work.* |
| *Job descriptions, pay scale, classification of positions (unionized, non-unionized)* |
| *Secondment agreements, both within government and outside, excluding personal information* |

| |
|---|
| *Personal service contracts of individuals not appointed pursuant to the Civil Service Act, excluding personal information and service or product trade secrets* |
| *Adjudication decisions of grievances filed by union employees* |
| **Selection & Hiring Processes** |
| *Number of applicants for a position* |
| *Number of persons intereviewed* |
| *Identity of selection panel to only those being interviewed* |
| *Name of successful candidate, once offer of employment has been accepted* |

**b)**

| **FINANCIAL INFORMATION** |
|---|
| *individual expense claims for a three month period within the current fiscal year and for a maximum of three individuals in one public body at any one time* |
| *cost of renovations for specific offices carried out within the previous six months* |
| *cost of special or specific events (ie, conferences, luncheons, workshops, training , etc. within three months of event having taken place* |
| *cost of sending a delegation out of the province or out of the country* |
| *Overtime expenditures (current year-to-date)* |
| *Detailed expenditure reports, by category, (eg. salaries, travel, etc.) for a maximum of three per fiscal year* |
| *contracts for construction and/or renovations of departmental facilities* |
| *Contracts for goods or services excluding personal information and service or product trade secrets* |

c)

| General Information |
| --- |
| *Final Program Audit Reports by the Corporate Internal Audit Unit* |
| *Readily available statistics upon verification that the information does not have personal information* |